Who, What, Why?

. . . *Mystery Man Poses A Lot Of Questions*

By TONY DURR
and SKIP JOHNSON
Tribune Staff Writers
(Last in a series)

Who and what is Vincent T. Lee and why is no one saying those terrible things about him?

Better yet, where is Vincent T. Lee and why is apparently no one able to find him?

LEE, A FORMER Tampa man known to have intimate ties with the Cuban government and with the man accused of killing President John F. Kennedy, has dropped out of sight.

Lee, investigators believe, could be the key to unravelling the mystery of the Tampa connection to the Kennedy assassination.

He received money from the Cuban government to operate his pro-Castro Fair Play for Cuba Committee both here in Tampa and later in New York as its national director, had written letters to and met with Lee Harvey Oswald in Tampa, and was at one time being investigated for having set up Oswald's trip to Mexico City. Many investigators believe that Oswald's Mexico City trip was only a stopover on his way to Cuba, but that has never been proved.

HOWEVER, Oswald's involvement with the pro-Castro FPCC organization is a documented fact, and his desire to visit Cuba often has been reported in governmental studies.

The last time the public heard from the man who once headed the national Fair Play for Cuba Committee was in February 1965 when he denied any involvement with an alleged plot to blow up the Statue of Liberty in New York.

Many of those arrested in that bizarre plot to destroy the Statue of Liberty and other national monuments were thought to have ties with Cuba and the FPCC. However, Lee denied any connection with those suspects and said that the FPCC had been out of existence since December 1963, less than a month after the assassination of President Kennedy.

Since then, no one has had any luck in locating the former merchant marine who rose to prominence in 1963 as the national leader of the pro-Castroites.

Vincent T. Lee
. . .could be the key

LEE'S OLD OFFICES at 799 Broadway, New York, are now the site of a clothing store.

His old residence at 37½ St. Mark's Place in New York is now rented to someone else, and no one in the small apartment building, nor the present owner of the building have any recollection of Lee.

The telephone directories of New York, the building department records, the city directory and the public health department have no records of Lee's whereabouts.

Joe Burton, former Tampa FBI associate, recently said that his contacts with reporters and investigators in Washington and New York had all revealed the same thing: Vincent T. Lee has disappeared.

And, though many rumors are currently circulating concerning the whereabouts of Lee, now 49 years old, Burton provided the most intriguing.

ACCORDING TO Burton, Lee could have been an FBI operative, a Cuban agent, or both.

Burton, who founded the front organization here for the FBI known as the Communist Red Star Cadre, said that Lee was brought into the organization by Harold S. Wilson.

"Wilson is an agency (FBI) man," Burton said. "That has been con-

firmed."

It was Wilson who was in charge of handling all membership applications for the Red Star Cadre, Burton said, and his job was specifically requested by the FBI.

It was also Wilson who not only processed the application of Lee but who also brought Lee to his first Red Star Cadre meeting.

FINALLY, when Lee dropped out of sight here in 1962, later to emerge in New York as the national director of the pro-Communist Fair Play for Cuba Committee, he left Wilson in charge of the FPCC organization in Tampa.

Recently contacted, Wilson had no comment.

When contacted by Lee Harvey Oswald in mid-1963 concerning membership in the FPCC, Lee advised Oswald to "get in touch" with the Tampa organization of FPCC for useful information on starting a chapter in New Orleans.

And, when Lee and Oswald met here in Tampa only a short while before the death of Kennedy in Dallas, some investigators believe they met at the home of Harold Wilson.

Burton said, "Rumor has it that Lee is being paid and is being kept undercover (by the FBI)."

AN FBI AGENT in New York, who is still with the agency and asked not to be identified, agreed, and said, "As long as he is receiving agency money, he will not be found."

So, Vincent T. Lee has escaped prosecution and investigation despite:

—refusal to cooperate with the House of Unamerican Activities Committee;

—refusal to cooperate with the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee;

—plans for prosecution by the U.S. Justice Department;

—an FBI investigation for allegedly setting up Oswald's trip to Mexico City only weeks before the death of Kennedy;

—giving false statements to the Warren Commission.

THIS YEAR, the Senate intelligence committee issued a new report on the Kennedy assassination and rapped the FBI and the CIA for not pursuing several leads that could have provided more information regarding the assassination.

Lee is one of those unpursued leads.

Yet, even the Senate committee had no information on the whereabouts of Vincent T. Lee.

If anyone knows the whereabouts of the elusive Mr. Lee, they aren't talking.

Until they do, the bizarre relationship between Vincent T. Lee and Lee Harvey Oswald may never be fully known.

And, the mysterious Tampa connection to the assassination of President Kennedy, which involves the Mafia, the FBI, the CIA, the Cuban government and the Fair Play for Cuba Committee may never be explained.